

In the Claims:

1. (Presently amended) A MHC class II antigenic peptides comprising
 - (a) ~~at least~~ the amino acid sequence of the peptide binding motif selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 49 to 57 and SEQ ID NOs. 103 to 122, or
 - (b) ~~at least~~ the amino acid sequence of the peptide binding motif selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 49 to 57 and SEQ ID NOs. 103 to 122, with additional N-and C-terminal flanking sequences of a corresponding sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 1 to 39 and SEQ ID NOs. 58 to 102.
2. (Presently amended) A MHC class II antigenic peptide comprising
 - (a) ~~at least~~ the amino acid sequence of the peptide binding motif of SEQ ID NO. 49, or
 - (b) ~~at least~~ the amino acid sequence of the peptide binding motif of SEQ ID NO. 49 with additional N-and C-terminal flanking sequences of a corresponding sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 1 to 3.
3. (Presently amended) A MHC class II antigenic peptide comprising
 - (a) ~~at least~~ the amino acid sequence of the peptide binding motif of SEQ ID NO. 103, or
 - (b) ~~at least~~ the amino acid sequence of the peptide binding motif of SEQ ID NO. 103 with additional N-and C-terminal flanking sequences of the corresponding sequence of SEQ ID NOs. 58 and 59.
4. (Presently amended) A MHC class II antigenic peptide comprising
 - (a) ~~at least~~ the amino acid sequence of the peptide binding motif of SEQ ID NO. 104, or
 - (b) ~~at least~~ the amino acid sequence of the peptide binding motif of SEQ ID NO. 104 with additional N-and C-terminal flanking sequences of the corresponding sequence of SEQ ID NO. 60.

5. (Presently amended) A MHC class II antigenic peptide comprising
(a) ~~at least~~ the amino acid sequence of the peptide binding motif of SEQ ID NO. 105,
or
(b) ~~at least~~ the amino acid sequence of the peptide binding motif of SEQ ID NO. 105
with additional N-and C-terminal flanking sequences of the corresponding sequence of
SEQ ID NO. 61.

6. (Presently amended) A MHC class II antigenic peptide comprising
(a) ~~at least~~ the amino acid sequence of the peptide binding motif of SEQ ID NO. 106,
or
(b) at least the amino acid sequence of the peptide binding motif of SEQ ID NO. 106
with additional N-and C-terminal flanking sequences of the corresponding sequence of
SEQ ID NO. 62.

7. (Presently amended) A MHC class II antigenic peptide comprising
(a) ~~at least~~ the amino acid sequence of the peptide binding motif of SEQ ID NO. 107,
or
(b) ~~at least~~ the amino acid sequence of the peptide binding motif of SEQ ID NO. 107
with additional N-and C-terminal flanking sequences of the corresponding sequence of
SEQ ID NO. 63.

8. (Presently amended) A MHC class II antigenic peptide comprising
(a) ~~at least~~ the amino acid sequence of the peptide binding motif of SEQ ID NO. 50,
or
(b) ~~at least~~ the amino acid sequence of the peptide binding motif of SEQ ID NO. 50
with additional N-and C-terminal flanking sequences of the corresponding sequence of
SEQ ID NO. 5.

9. (Presently amended) A MHC class II antigenic peptide comprising

(a) ~~at least the amino acid sequence of the peptide binding motif of SEQ ID NO. 108,~~
or

(b) ~~at least the amino acid sequence of the peptide binding motif of SEQ ID NO. 108~~
with additional N-and C-terminal flanking sequences of the corresponding sequence of
SEQ ID NOs. 64 to 67.

10. (Presently amended) A MHC class II antigenic peptide comprising

(a) ~~at least the amino acid sequence of the peptide binding motif of SEQ ID NO. 109,~~
or

(b) ~~at least the amino acid sequence of the peptide binding motif of SEQ ID NO. 109~~
with additional N-and C-terminal flanking sequences of the corresponding sequence of
SEQ ID NO. 68.

11. (Presently amended) A MHC class II antigenic peptide comprising

(a) ~~at least the amino acid sequence of the peptide binding motif of SEQ ID NO. 110,~~
or

(b) ~~at least the amino acid sequence of the peptide binding motif of SEQ ID NO. 110~~
with additional N-and C-terminal flanking sequences of the corresponding sequence of
SEQ ID NOs. 69 and 70.

12. (Presently amended) A MHC class II antigenic peptide comprising

(a) ~~at least the amino acid sequence of the peptide binding motif of SEQ ID NO. 111,~~
or

(b) ~~at least the amino acid sequence of the peptide binding motif of SEQ ID NO. 111~~
with additional N-and C-terminal flanking sequences of the corresponding sequence of
SEQ ID NO. 72.

13. (Presently amended) A MHC class II antigenic peptide comprising

(a) ~~at least the amino acid sequence of the peptide binding motif of SEQ ID NO. 112,~~
or

(b) ~~at least the amino acid sequence of the peptide binding motif of SEQ ID NO. 112 with additional N-and C-terminal flanking sequences of the corresponding sequence of SEQ ID NO. 73.~~

14. (Presently amended) ~~A~~ The MHC class II antigenic peptide according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 13~~ linked to a MHC class II molecule.

15. (Presently amended) ~~An~~ purified antibody composition which is selectively reactive with ~~to~~ a MHC class II antigenic peptide according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 13.~~

16. (Presently amended) ~~a~~ A nucleic acid molecule encoding a peptide or polypeptide according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 14.~~

17. (Original) A recombinant nucleic acid construct comprising the nucleic acid molecule according to claim 16 operably linked to an expression vector.

18. (Presently amended) A ~~host~~ cell containing the nucleic acid construct according to claim 17.

19-22. (Canceled).

23. (Presently amended) A pharmaceutical composition comprising a MHC class II antigenic peptide according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 13, an antibody according to claim 15, or a polypeptide selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs 40 to 48 and SEQ ID NOs 123 to 141, and optionally a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.~~

24. (Canceled).

25. (Presently amended) A method for diagnosing RA comprising detecting in a patient serum sample the presence of one or more ~~The use of the MHC class II antigenic~~

peptides according to claim 1, ~~wherein the antigenic peptide is a marker for erosive and/or non-erosive RA.~~

26. (Canceled).

27. (Canceled).

28. (Presently amended) ~~The use of a polypeptide~~ A method for diagnosing RA comprising detecting in a patient serum sample the presence of one or more peptides selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs 40 to 48 and SEQ. ID NOs 123 to 141 as a marker for RA, preferably for erosive and/or non-erosive RA.

29. (Canceled).

30. (New) A pharmaceutical composition comprising a peptide selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs 40 to 48 and SEQ ID NOs. 123 to 141, and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

31. (New) A pharmaceutical composition comprising an antibody according to claim 15 and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.